

The Invitational Week 67: Bring Up the Rear

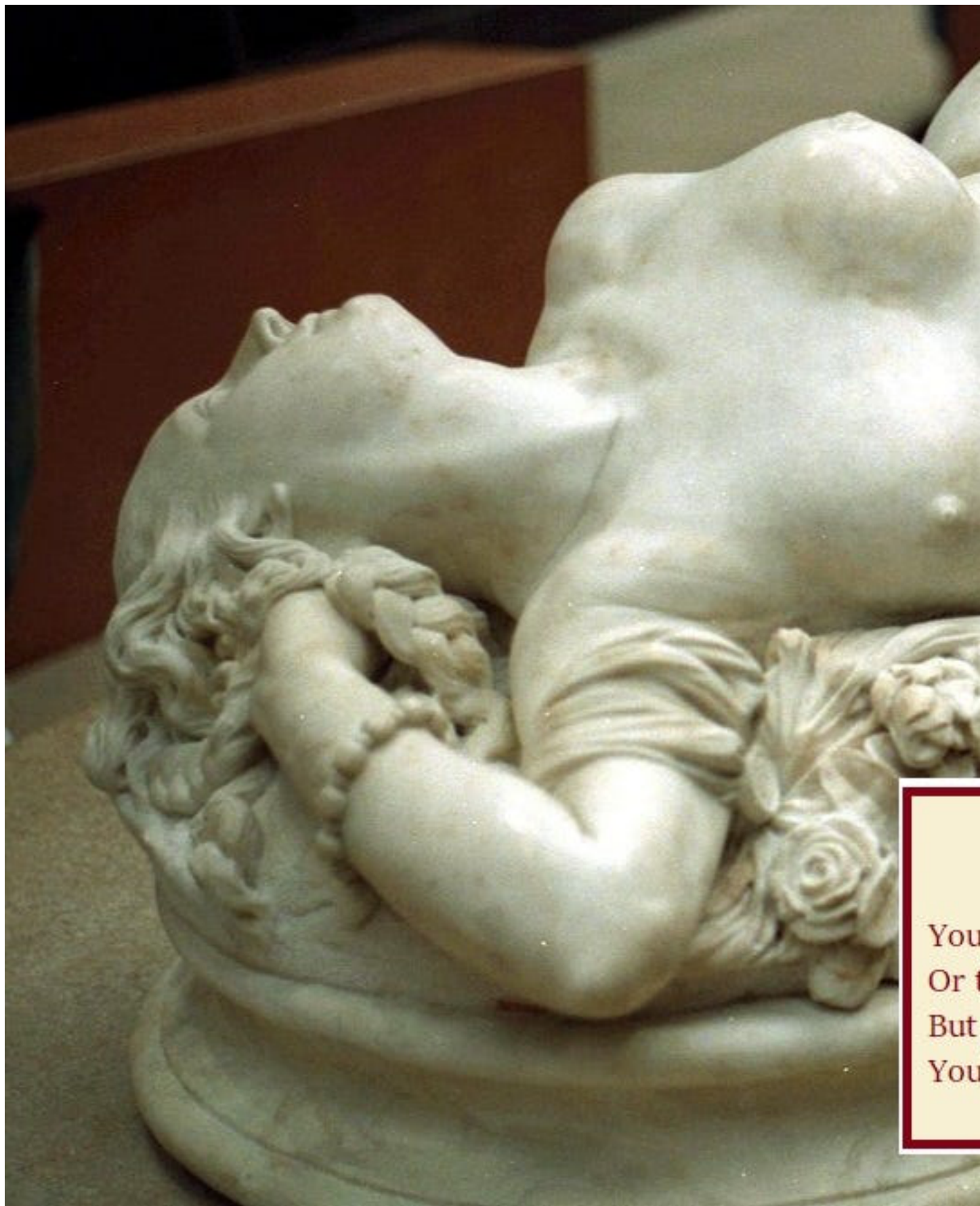
Move the last letter of a word to the front. Plus winning poems about artworks.

[PAT MYERS](#)

AND

[GENE WEINGARTEN](#)

APR 11, 2024



You
Or t
But
You

A runner-up in our Invitational contest for poems about works of art. See the rest of the Week 65 winners below. (Sculpture in the Musée d'Orsay, Paris)

O-RING: A band that holds a group together but is the weakest part of it. (*Craig Dykstra*)

SNIPPLE: Babies agree: the Best Stuff on Earth. (*Kyle Bonney*)

LB.-AGE: What you'll add from overeating breakfast carbs. (*John McCooey*)

Ever since those [results from our 1998 change-one-letter contest](#) started to move around “cyberspace” on “e-mail” and then on “the World Wide Web” — and [still pop up in corrupted form](#) — The Invitational has been known best for neologism contests, especially ones that ask you to take an existing word and alter it slightly to make a new word, usually relating somehow to the original.

Here's a variation that we did only one time, back in 2011. Maybe it was because we thought the results were so good that we worried we couldn't match them. Maybe we just forgot. Anyway, have at it.

For Invitational Week 67: Move the last letter of a word, phrase, or name to the front, and then define the result, as in the examples above from the original contest above ([full results here](#)). You can alter punctuation or capitalization.

[Click here for this week's entry form](#), or go to tinyURL.com/inv-form-67. As usual, you may submit up to 25 entries for this week's contest, preferably all on the same form. Also as usual, please submit each individual entry as one single paragraph; i.e., don't push Enter until you're starting the next entry.

Deadline is Saturday, April 20, at 9 p.m. ET. Results will run here in The Gene Pool on Thursday, April 25.

Winner gets a little pink “Nose Condom,” “for the safe practice of brown nosing.” Complete with testimonials on the packaging like “Six months ago my

boss didn't know I existed. Now it's weekends on his yacht." Donated (unused) by Dave Prevar. Warning: Don't Google this or you will get a very different product. This is such a lousy prize, even by our standards, that we'll throw in some vintage Loser Magnets.

Runners-up get autographed fake money featuring the Czar or Empress, in one of [eight nifty designs](#). Honorable mentions get bupkis, except for a personal email from the E, plus the [Fir Stink for First Ink](#) for First Offenders.

MoMA Mia! The artwork poems of Week 65

In [Week 65](#) we asked you to choose any artwork we could run a picture of, and write a funny poem about it. The results were spectacular, as you will see. It turns out that Losers, in addition to being famous smart-asses, know more than a bit about art.

Third runner-up: See Judy Freed's poem in the art at the top of this page.

Second runner-up:



Tracey Emin's "My Bed" at the Tate museum in Liverpool, 2016. (Photo by Richard Stonehouse, Getty Images)

"My Bed"

Tracey Emin broke all the rules from the start,
Thus becoming an enfant terrible of art.
Spending four days in bed drinking nothing but booze,
She declared it was art and got stellar reviews.
"My Bed" is unmade, stained with menstrual blood,
And the floor's strewn with underwear, condoms and crud.
The furor she caused, though, was quick to abate,
And today it's worth eight million pounds to the Tate.
(Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

First runner-up:

"White Painting [three panel]," by Robert Rauschenberg

"It's brilliant, Bob!" gushed the curator on-the phone.
"Daylight and shadow make a shifting tone-on-tone!"
Puzzled at his praise, I glanced at the crate
Where my finished artwork still sat in wait.
The couriers must have grabbed the *other* box,
The one with three blank canvases fresh from the docks!
Pausing just briefly, I said, "Gerald, you're too kind.
But I'm glad you see precisely what I designed!"
(Pam Shermeyer, Lathrup Village, Mich.)

And the winner of the "Scream" finger puppet:



Grey Lines Blue, and

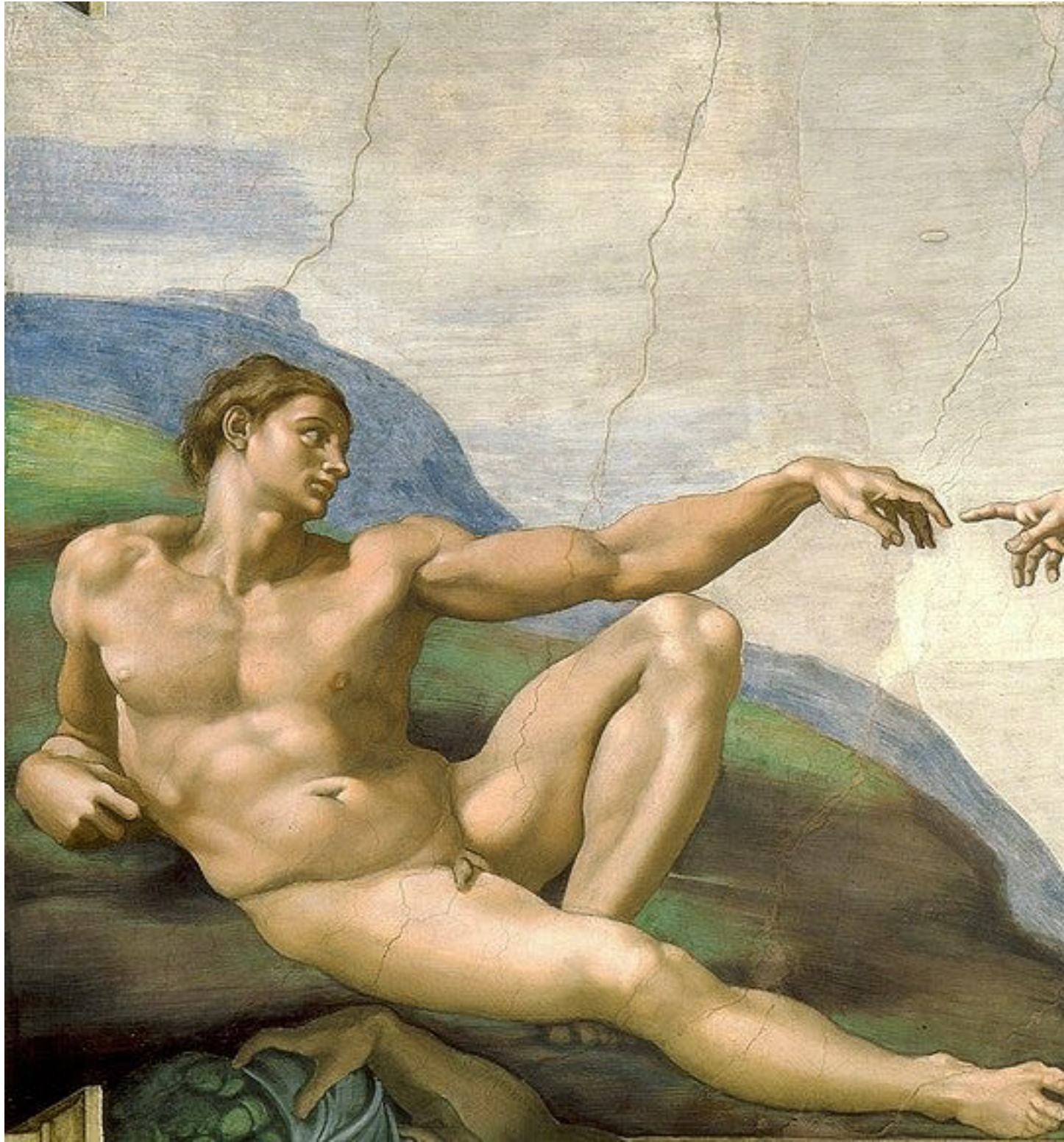
Like so many
O'Keeffe's

This resembles
feminine

But she swears
a flower

As to anything
remained

ILL AT EASEL: Honorable mentions



Two reflections on “The Creation of Adam” by Michelangelo:

The ceiling of the Sistine Chapel
Has a fresco that's a zinger —
What is it that Adam's saying?
I suspect it's "Pull my finger."
(Richard Franklin, Alexandria, Va.)

If Adam had a mother not,
That navel must be Photoshopped!
If he was first, who took this shot?
It's time this AI crap is stopped!
(Hildy Zampella, Sarasota, Fla.)

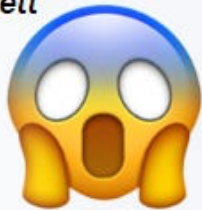
What have we here, in shades of green
With blue, and yellow ocher?
A woman who from this day forth
Will *never* play strip poker.

—Jonathan Jensen



Flouting painter
pedagogy,
Munch produced
the first emoji.

– Gary Crockett



Detail from Edvard Munch's "The Scream," 1893

**Is there a nobler pursuit than think
Using our brains to examine, unblin
The difficult questions of our lives,
Like hit or stand with a six and two
Or in my case, the inner muse chan
I wonder where you left your pants**

Pam Sherr

**He's naked and having
the deepest of thoughts
On some toilet-height solid rock seating
If sculpted today he'd be on a bidet
And not thinking, just scrolling and twe**

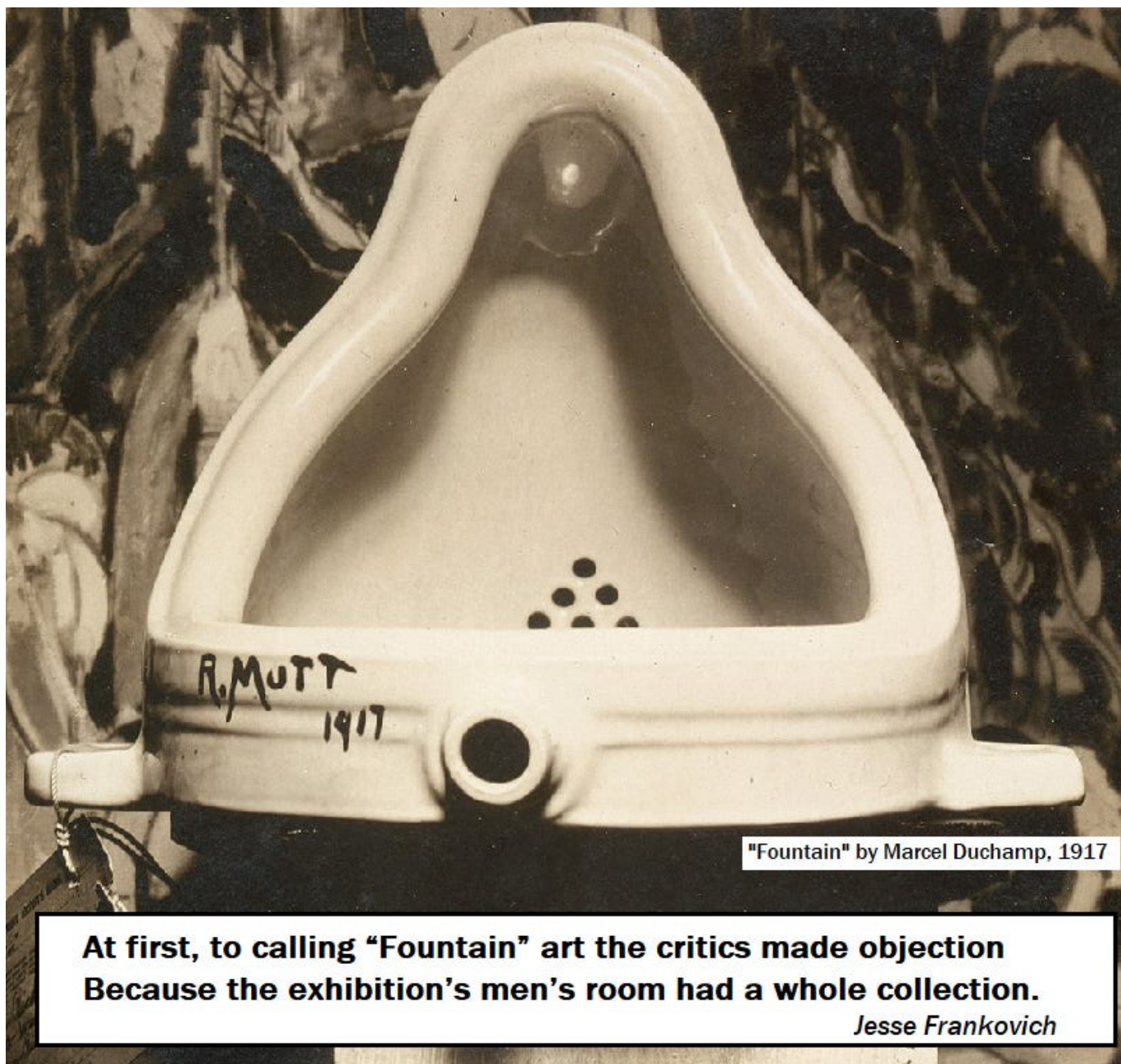
Gary Croo

The Kiss

The models were directed:
a mouth-to-mouth embrace.
But when he tried to kiss her lips,
she quickly turned her face.
With a sore and twisted neck,
her panties in a bunch,
She said, "You had to go and have
some herring for your lunch?"

Judy Freed

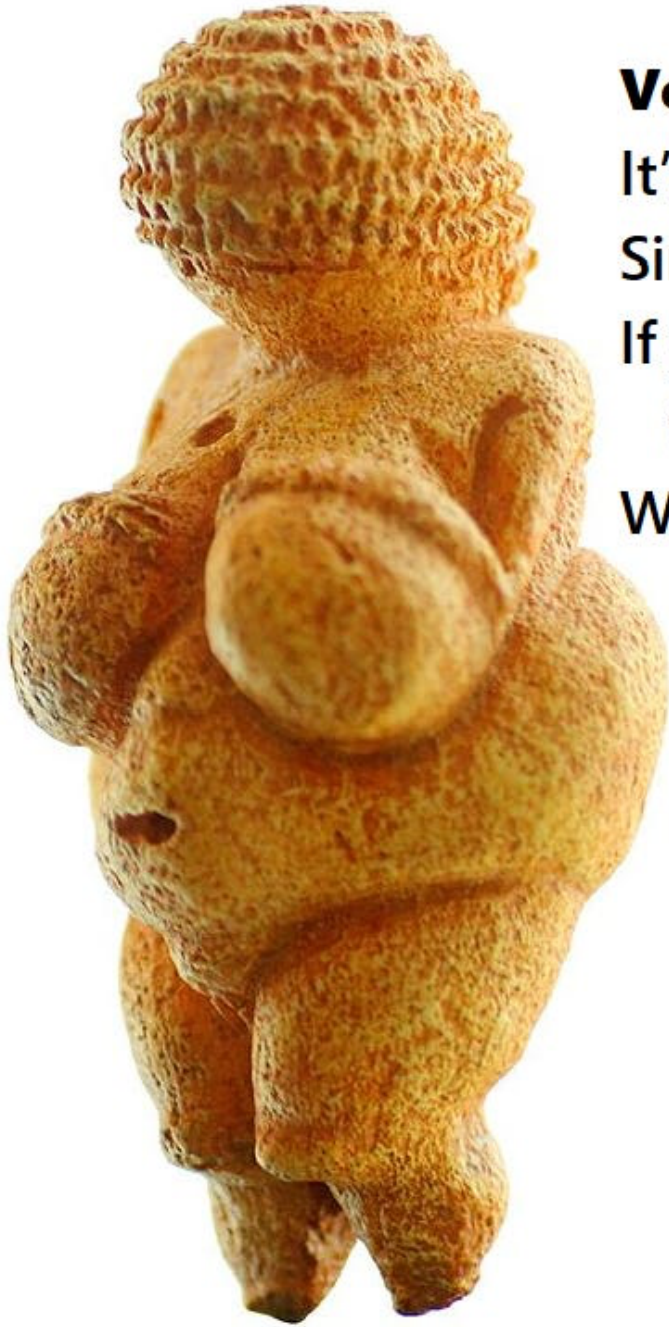
Painting by Gustav Klimt, 1907-08



"Fountain" by Marcel Duchamp, 1917

**At first, to calling “Fountain” art the critics made objection
Because the exhibition’s men’s room had a whole collection.**

Jesse Frankovich



Venus of Willendorf

It's thirty thousand years or so
Since you were last alive;
If you were here,
the Orange Bro
Would rate you a 1.5.

Duncan Stevens

Natural History Museum, Vienna



“The Lovers II,” by René Magritte, 1928

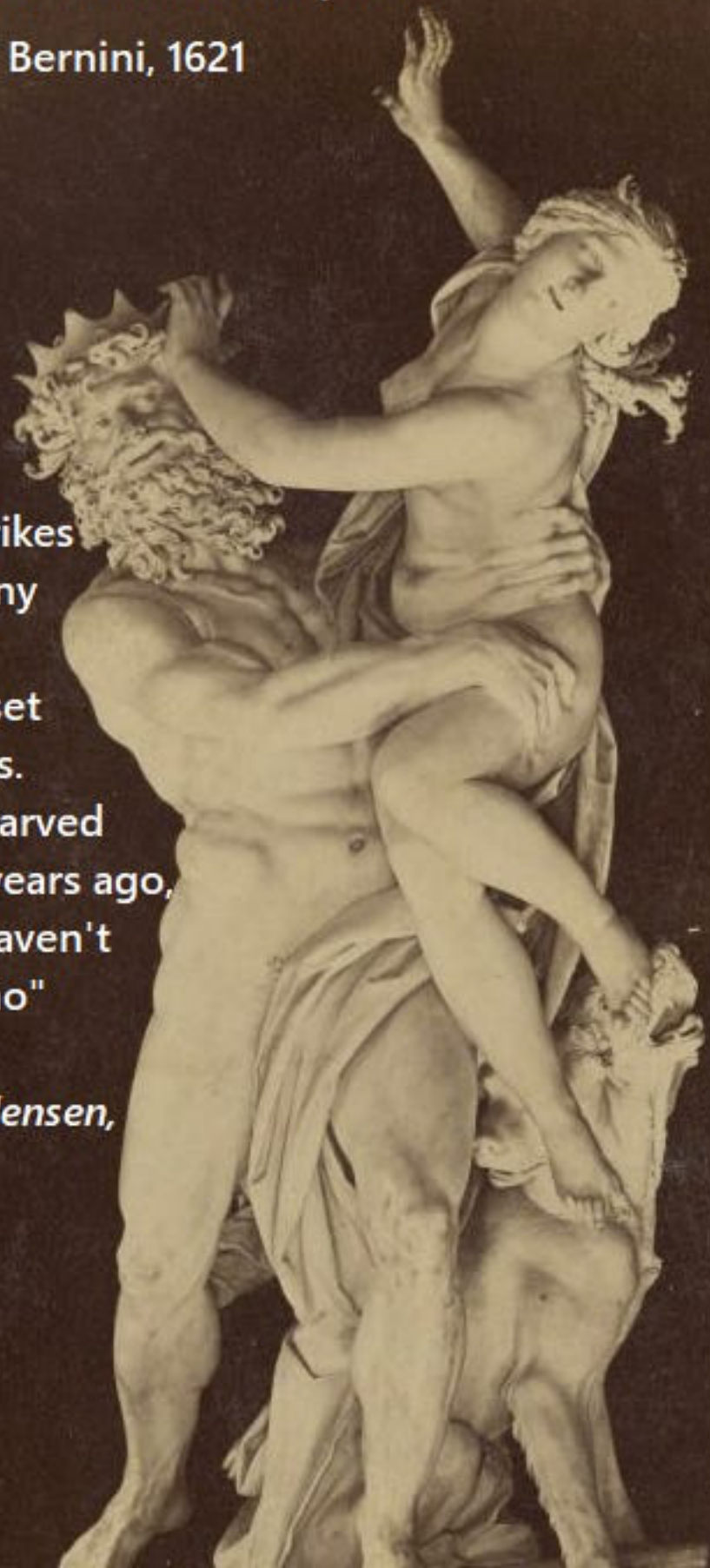
When they met at the bar, they were drunk.
He thought she was cute; she thought “Hunk!”
But, in truth, beauty’s fleeting.
That’s why they make sheeting —
So daylight won’t change what they thunk.
(Jon Gearhart, *Des Moines*)

The Abduction of Proserpina

Sculpture by Bernini, 1621

A scene that strikes
a nerve for many
ladies:
Persephone is set
upon by Hades.
The piece was carved
four hundred years ago,
And men still haven't
learned that "no"
means no.

--Jonathan Jensen,
Baltimore



“I Am,” by Salvatore Garau, 2021 ([read about it here](#))

“I Am” was nothing to look at,
On its elegant white stand,
But became a “must haven’t” for eighteen grand
When a buyer bought the empty space,
Called a “density of thoughts” — and with a straight face —
By the artist of the sculpture made only of air,
Who was happy to certify: Nothing was there. (*Stu Segal, “Southeast U.S.”*)



Two reflections on Michelangelo's "David"

I stand here in this gallery in Florence,
Where crowds of tourists, much to my abhorrence
Still come to gawk and laugh at limitations
Apparent on all David imitations
Around the world, with whom I share this linkage:
We're all unwilling poster boys for shrinkage.
(Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

Young Abishag was hired for to lie beneath the sheet
Beside the aging David to provide the king with ... heat.
The Bible says that Dave showed no reaction to her touch --
If Mikey's art is true to life, she wasn't missing much.
(Elliott Shevin, Efrat, West Bank)

"Hometown Lake" by Thomas Kinkade [\(see it here\)](#)

The price of "Hometown Lake" might rise
Now that Tom's defunct,
Although we're asking post-demise
Why it's not been junked. *(Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)*

Hey, George, this attack's s'posed to happen at night!
Not so stealthy to do it by day!
And what's with the green-shirted dude on the right?
Why's he paddling the opposite way?

-- *Duncan Steele*



c



**The “flying skirt” photo of Marilyn Monroe, by Weegee (Arthur Fellig),
1954**

In some lines of work, they say, “Dress for success!”

In others, the mantra “Success means undress!”

So Marilyn (never applauded as chaste)

Was caught with her skirt flapping up to her waist.

(Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)



Uffizi Gallery, Florence

“Judith Beheading Holofernes,” by Artemisia Gentileschi, c. 1620

She’s in the act of slicing through his neck;

On seeing it, my first reaction’s “Yech!”

But then that's followed by "Am I psychotic?"
Because it's disconcertingly erotic. (*Frank Osen*)

"Orange and Yellow" by Mark Rothko ([see it here](#))

"Orange and Yellow" might evoke a vibrant sunny morn,
But I believe it gives a close-up view of candy corn. (*Jesse Frankovich*)



Edward Hopper's "New York Movie," 1939.

We see ourselves set out among the towers,
Engage the streets, fight for a life and win it.

A half-lived life with unmet chances sours
The mind, and all the aspirations in it.

What—have a dream? She's too tired to begin it.
If she could choose just one from all the powers,
She'd leave her station in a New York minute,
But she must stay for two more goddamned hours.
(David Franks, Washington County, Ark.)

A well-intentioned parishioner at a 16th-century Spanish church attempted some art restoration in 2012:



Hey, ma'am, big th
Your efforts, they
Don't bring result
Christ now looks l

The headline “MoMA Mia!” is by Lee Graham; Jesse Frankovich wrote the honorable-mentions subhead.

Still running — deadline 9 p.m. ET Saturday, March 13: our Week 66 contest to make an anagram of a business or product. Click on the link below.



The Invitational Week 66: Seeds of Change

[PAT MYERS](#) AND [GENE WEINGARTEN](#)

NEXT WEEK, THE HORSES! Next Thursday, April 18, we’ll have our annual wordplay contest to “breed” the names of two of this year’s Triple Crown-nominated racehorses and name the “foal” that cleverly alludes to both names. Even if you’re not a yearly subscriber, you can enter this contest AND the “grandfoal” contest two weeks hence for just the single-month \$5 for the whole race card, along with all the other stuff for that whole month. Subscribe now to make sure you get the email notification.